

Sara Katsani EH14..
Vlachs EH15*The Changing Life of the Shepherd*

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On the credit side, one must reckon 5 to 7 okas of milk each year from the producing animals for family consumption, with some of this being worked into cheese. The family also has a supply of meat from the flock. But the greatest gain is a 15 percent annual increase in the flock that the owner can expect even if he sells the lambs listed in the table of income; this means that a year later the flock of 700 should number 805, barring serious diseases or natural disasters.

Some of the discussions revealed further interesting facts: winter pasture costs 50 drachmas per animal in winter and 20 in summer; a sheep needs more than one oka of salt each year; the chief shepherd, when he goes on business trips to arrange for the sale of his milk or lambs or to hire shepherds, travels by bus, sleeps in a hotel, eats in restaurants, and thinks of himself as a businessman; there is a small tax per oka of milk which is paid to the winter community by the "grocer," who buys the milk.

What was to have been a short conference beginning at five in the late afternoon extended to nine o'clock without a moment's let-up. There was much loud talking, which would lead a stranger to expect a fight the next minute; but then someone would make a humorous remark at which everyone would laugh. Use of pantomime, modulated voice control, appeal to the neutral listener to agree to the case one was presenting; humor, and willingness to follow an argument to its logical conclusion — all made one think of the agora of classic Athens transferred to a dimly lit, modestly furnished upstairs office of a gentle, well-informed government bureaucrat. And just at the crescendo of what seemed to be the verbal prelude to physical violence, the words "symphonia, symphonia" would ring out, thus showing that agreement had been reached. Voices and feelings would calm down for a while, before some new dramatic moment would build up again. Berates, the Karagoun, sat more quietly than the rest but seemed to enjoy the session just as much.

As we parted in the dark streets of Ioannina, where Turkish architecture with its balconies and minarets in the moonlight makes one suddenly feel very much a part of the East, Christos Berates agreed to visit us late on the next day in Konitsa and take us out to his night encampment.

In the time intervening, through the courtesy of the director of agriculture, I had an opportunity to read the classic Greek work on the nomads, published in 1925 as a bulletin of the Greek Agricultural Society under the title of *Nomadic, Permanent and Agricultural Livestock Production in Greece*.¹¹ It was most encouraging to find that the observations I had made corresponded as far as they went to those of the author, Demosthenes Sirakes. Needless to say, he provided many more details than I could have collected in the time at my disposal.

For one thing, he estimated the nomad livestock owners in 1925 at 13,700 families, divided as follows:

S
V
511
434
233
[433]
[262]

S
V
G
[427]

G
124
521
152

G
124
341

G
114

G
563
162
S
V
162

I. VARIOUS FORMS OF THE GREEK POPULAR HOUSE

A. THE MODERN GREEK HOUSE

First, we must note that in Greece, in ancient times as well as to-day, we see both basic forms of dwelling, namely both curved and rectangular. As regards the first form (round, elliptical, horse-shoe), this is limited to the most primary forms of life, that is to the nomadic or semi-nomadic shepherd populations (Sarakatsanoi, Vlachoi) and sporadically to the poorest class of the farmers living in the Thessalian and other plain districts, who have kept, by tradition, the elementary and primitive methods of construction and roofing of the conical and saddle-type huts, and especially the use of organic materials such as wood, branches, weeds and reeds, which are easily provided by the marshes and the forests of these areas (¹). As regards the rectangular houses, these are now more prevalent, as they were even in prehistoric Greece. The reasons for this may be that the rectangular buildings can be easily added to and divided into regular compartments (²). That is why we shall mainly speak about the rectangular houses.

Greece, from a geographical as well as from a housing point of view, finds herself on the boundary between the northern temperate zone and the desert zone, which includes Northern Africa and Front Asia with Asia Minor and Iran. Consequently, continental Greece belongs to the countries of houses with sloping or eagle type roofs, and insular Greece together with Cyprus (excluding the Ionian Islands and the Islands of the Northern Aegean) to the countries of houses with flat roofs.

The explanation of this may lie in the fact that the flat roof may have originated from the simple flat shelter-roof which is essential

1) G. Megas, *Θεσολογικαί οικησεις*, Athens 1946 pp. 11-16. For further details on primitive types of dwelling see also Franz Eilmann, *Haus und Hof im Altertum*, I Berlin 1926 pp. 45 foll.

2) See Fr. Eilmann, *op. cit.* pp. 39 and foll., 41.

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in the desert lands to protect both men and cattle from the burning rays of the sun, and the eagle-type or saddle-type roof may have its origin in the sloping roofs of the primitive shelters used as a protection from rain and wind (1).

As it is well known, the roof is the primary and most important element of house construction, and the form and method of its construction exerts an influence both on the architectural articulation and on the entire composition of the house, so that the differences between the two categories may be mainly explained through it (2).

x 342
 341 For this reason we shall first examine the sloping roof houses and then the houses with flat roof, which roof is called «doma».

a. HOUSES WITH SLOPING OR EAGLE-TYPE ROOF

1. One-storey houses.

These houses, especially in the plain districts, are usually made out of brick with only their foundations, to a height of 40-50 cm. from the ground, built in stone; they are one-storied and are covered with tiles.

In their original and simplest form, these houses consist of one rectangular room, including under one roof the family, their cattle and corn. They are either of the narrow or of the wide-front types.

The most ancient and the most closely related to the original form of Greek house, is the simple narrow-front house, belonging to the type known as «megaron». It has the entrance on one of its narrow sides, having usually in front of it a «προστώον», that is an open portico. Sometimes the side walls of the house are extended as far as the front of this «prostoon», thus forming what is called the «αυχιστάδες» (antae) having usually two wooden poles between them (τὴν αὐχιστάδων type); but sometimes the side walls are not extended and then the προστώον remains entirely open, and its roof is supported by two or more poles (πρόστυλος, δίστυλος or τριπρόστυλος type).

This type of house, with an eagle-type or saddle-type roof, is plainly found in continental Greece, in the Greek villages of Haemos,

1) Fr. Oelmann, op. cit. pp. 61 foll., and in «Gnomon» 1927 p. 173.

2) Fr. Oelmann, Haus und Hof pp. 41 and 90.

near Messimvria (Haimonaa, Bana, Alvlassi, Ravdas etc.), in some vil-
lages of the Didymoteichon area (Poemenikon, Vryssikon, Paliouri, 342^x
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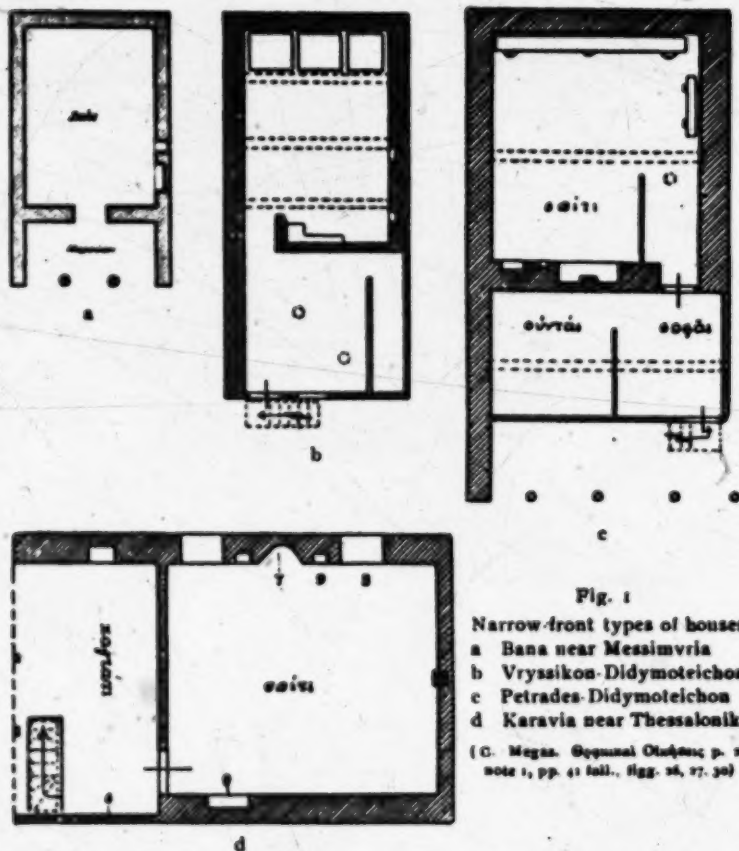


Fig. 1

Narrow-front types of houses
a Bana near Messimvria
b Vryssikon-Didymoteichon
c Petrades-Didymoteichon
d Karavia near Thessaloniki

(O. Megas. *Θεσσαλονικισμός* p. 28
note 1, pp. 41 foll., figs. 26, 27, 30)

Petrades, etc.) and sporadically in other parts of Greece, as in the Ka-
ravia village of the Thessaloniki area¹⁾ (Fig. 1. See also Plate I a, 1-6).

1) O. Megas *Θεσσαλονικισμός* pp. 27, 29, 44 foll. For financial reasons, [104]
elichés of the Greek edition have been also used in the present one. That is
why we are presenting the equivalent English word only for the main parts

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Another narrow-front type of house is also the so-called *καλύβη* or *χαμόγειο σπίτι* (hut, low house) on the island of Lemnos which, as in the two-storey type, has a tiled roof⁽¹⁾ (Fig. 2).

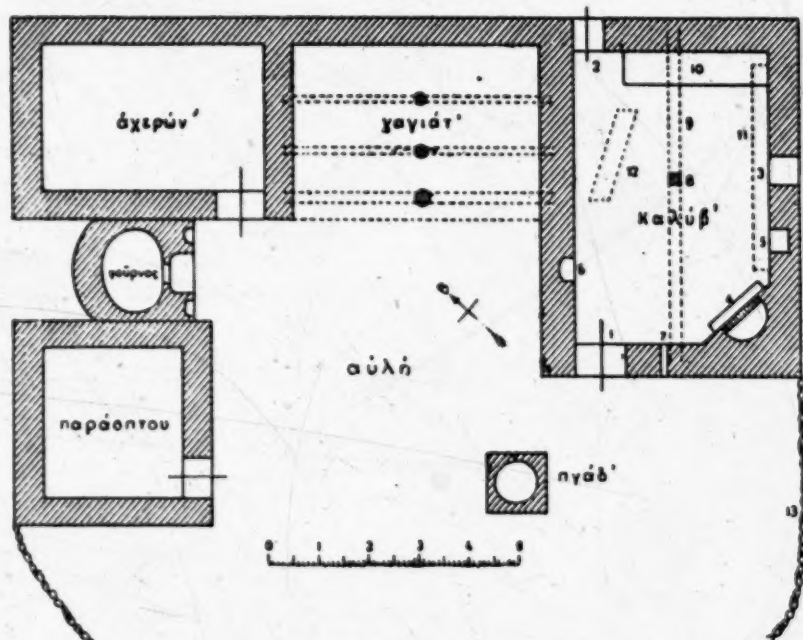


Fig. 2 House and courtyard at Physini in Lemnos
(G. Megas 'H λαϊκὴ οἰκοδομία τῆς Λήμνου, fig. 2)

Καλύβη (Kalyvi)=low house, hut; *χαγιάτι* (hayati)=portico; *ἀσπερὺν* (aspevyn)=hayloft; *παράσπυτος* (paraspitos)=outhouse; *αὐλή* (avili)=courtyard; *πηγάδι* (pigadi)=well; *φούρνος* (furnos)=oven.

The wide-front house, however, is found more frequently in the Greek countryside. This house has its entrance and its *προστώφον* on the long side of the rectangular plan (*σπίτια διπλανά* i.e. side-houses, as they are called in the Haimos villages⁽²⁾). (Fig. 3 and 4. Plate II).

[104] of the house: *σπίτι* (*spiti* [hospitium])=house; *ὀδνῆς* or *ὀνῆς* (*oda* Turk.)=room; *μυροδοῖτι* (*brusti*) or *χαγιάτι* (*hayati*)=portico, veranda.

1) G. Megas, 'H λαϊκὴ οἰκοδομία τῆς Λήμνου, pp. 7 foll.

2) G. Megas, *Θερμαϊκὰ Οἰκίσματα* p. 27, *Θεσσαλικὰ Οἰκίσματα* p. 16. Fig. 10.

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The προστώον¹ is formed by a simple extension of the roof of the house downwards, and constitutes a very useful element for the needs of agricultural life in general, as it not only protects the entrance of the house from the rain, but it also provides a well aired and at the same time a well protected residence, where the family may gather, especially during the summer months. It is here that the family takes its meals and sleeps in summer time. It is here that the women put up their loom, spread and comb the wool, dry the maize and the sesame, the onions and the other fruits. And it is also here that the oven is usually built.

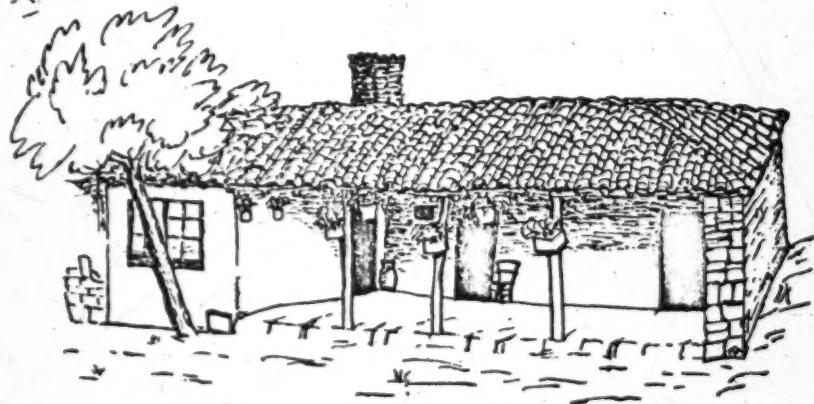


Fig. 4 Old house at Ferrai in Thrace

(G. Megas, Ερμηνεία Οικησιών, fig. 5)

The increase of space in the houses of both types is done in two directions: a) by extending the top beam of the roof and b) by extending the roof in the direction of the sides of the gable.

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In the first instance, and in the case of narrow-front houses, two successive rooms are formed in depth, the προστώον remaining on the front of the house either open or closed (Fig. 5. Plate I b 1-3). In this last case, a new προστώον is sometimes added, open on its front side (Fig. 1 c. Plate I a 6). In the case of the wide-front houses, two or more rooms are being formed on the same horizontal line (Figg. 3 and 6. Plate III-VII).

In the second instance and in the case of the narrow-front houses,

This was the original place of the hearth. Later, however, this place was moved to the middle of one of the walls, usually the middle wall separating the rooms of the two-room house⁽¹⁾, or to one of the corners of the room (since γωνία = a) corner, b) fire-place⁽²⁾ where a chimney was built for the escape of smoke. 354

2. Two-storey houses.

In mountainous districts, such as in most of continental Greece, and especially in Epirus, Western Macedonia, S. Greek mainland (Sterea Hellas) and the Peloponese, when the arable land is limited, and the main resources of the inhabitants are the cultivation of vine and stock breeding, the expansion of the house on a large area is not easy, due to the nature of the ground. For on an inclined soil, such as in the mountains, the house is usually dug into the soil and this requires rock blasting which, during the Turkish rule, when explosives were hard to get, was difficult, if not impossible, and extremely expensive. That is why the foundation of the house was made on the bare rock and the parallelogram of its plan was usually situated with its long side perpendicular to the slope. Thus, also, in places where the nature of the ground allowed some rock digging, a deep embedding was avoided. In such a ground, the need for the increase of space was met by the creation of another storey or, more correctly, by the construction of a basement under the house, usually under its entire surface, provided that the longer side of the plan was perpendicular to the slope, and in rarer cases, under part of the house only, when the longer side of the plan was parallel to the slope.⁽³⁾ 332 342 x

Thus the two-storey form of house was created, consisting of an upper storey and of a basement presenting, just as the one-storey house, both simple and composite forms (two-storey single house, and two storey double house)⁽⁴⁾. 342 x [341] ●

We may often see two-storey houses, of the eagle type roof, which have either a narrow or a wide front, but the narrow-front ones are to be seen only in those areas where there are narrow

1) G. Megas, *Θεσσαλ. Οικήσεις* pp. 10 and 38, Figg. 1, 8, 10, 11, 21, 23, 25, etc.

2) G. Megas, *Οικοδ. Αθήν.* p. 7, Fig. 2.

3) Cf. the so-called «Sterfogalario» in Aetolia, D. Loukopoulou *ibid.*

pp. 5-7.

4) See G. Megas, *Θεσσαλικαὶ Οικήσεις* pp. 39 foll.

The most usual method of increasing space to the flat-roof houses is by making additions.

In the case of the narrow-front house, whose *προστώον*, as has been said, is mostly arranged into an anti-room or a kitchen, another is usually added in front of it, in the shape of an open or a covered yard (fig. 26 Plate VIIIa 6. 5b IXa 7) or sometimes an equivalent space is added to the back part of the house in the form of a back-room (Plate VIIIa 9. 9a). An increase of space in this type of house is also achieved by the addition of a roof over the main room (fig. 26) or also over its anti-room (Nissyros)⁽¹⁾ and by the addition of one or more rooms all along the long side of the narrow-front house (VIII b, 1-4).

Similarly, the spaces of the wide-front house are increased by : a) arranging the *προστώον* or by adding one or two auxiliary spaces on the frontside (fig. 31, Plate IXa, 3, 4)⁽²⁾ and b) by adding a smaller room into one of its short sides, used as a kitchen or a mill room (*καρόσπιτο*) and which often has a room on its roof (house with upper room, Ikaria, Telos, Nisyros, Karpathos) (fig. 32, Plate IXb, 1, 2)⁽³⁾.

The ascent to this upper room is effected through an external stone staircase ending to a wide landing (*ἀξάρα*) under which the space is used for the construction of the oven, the chicken-coop and the pig sty (*δορυμᾶς*). Sometimes, this addition is made on both the narrow sides of the house, in which case a living room (*σαῖλα*) is built above the main house (Telos) (Plate IXc, 3a)⁽⁴⁾.

In Crete, and probably also in Cyprus, (there is very little information about the houses of the latter), where the arable land is more ample, the agricultural products more abundant, and where the livestock are stabled near the house of the farmer, there is a need for a more composite house. Such a house is formed by the addition of more rooms to the upper and lower floors.

But while in the houses with a roof, inclined on both sides, the additional spaces are placed under the same roof, which is extended in certain directions and gives an organic unity to the whole group (p. 7), in the flat-roof house the covering of each space of the house is independent and no architectural element connects the various

1) O. Megas, 'Η λαϊκή κατοικία Δωδεκανήσου, figg. 26. 27. 28.

2) Ibid. figg. 13. 14. 19. 20. 23.

3) Ibid. figg. 29. 30.

4) Ibid. fig. 31.

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 ● [341] components of the house which are added without connection to each other. Thus, the smaller roof (παρδάλινο) which is normally added to the narrow side of the wide-front house, is easily added to one end of the front side (Plate IXb 3, 4), or to extend over the building line according to requirements (Plate IXc 4). The only connecting element between the various parts of this flat-roof house is the need to

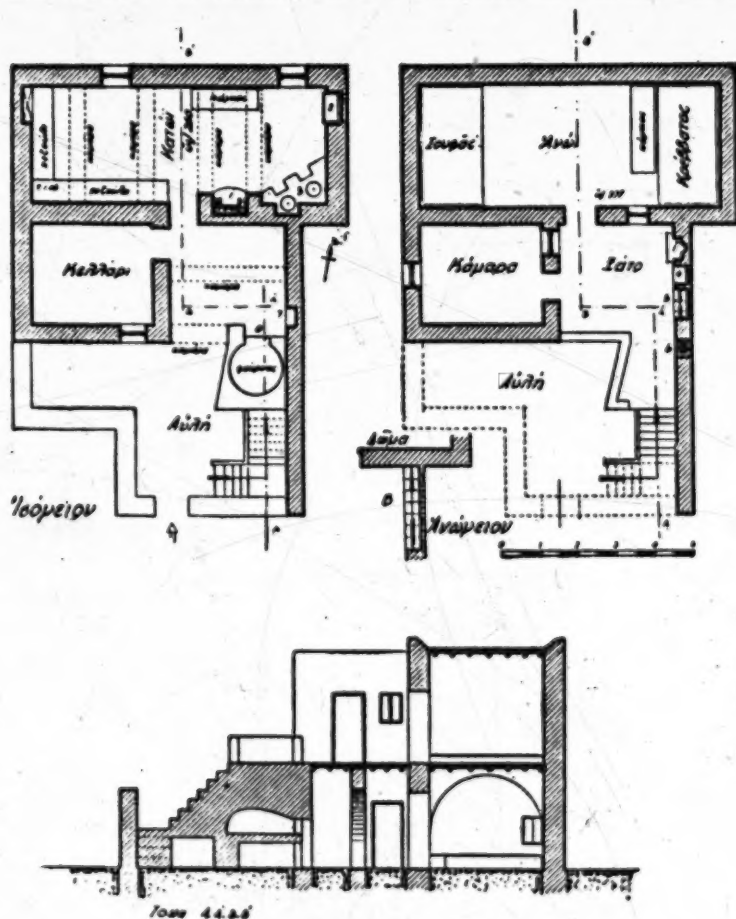


Fig. 31 Nikeia, Nisayros. House of Dim. Chartophyllis
 (G. Megas, *Ασκήσις αρχιτεκτονικῆς ἀνδραγωγίας* fig. 23)

- * 342 concentrate everything around the main living space, so that all
 ● 341 rooms open to a central yard. Thus, in Crete, Cyprus, etc., apart from
 the double and triple blocks, we find multiple blocks, in one or two
 floors, which in the plan have the form of Γ or Π or sometimes T (Plate
 IXc 5. 6, IXd 2-5).

[353] It is seen, from the whole examination, that the island house has
 not had the fine evolution of the house of continental Greece but
 rather remained faithful to simple forms, a legacy of the ancient
 times. However, in this primitive simplicity, the island house kept the
 beauty of simple lines and of natural forms, both the arch and the
 arched windows and doors giving to the cubic form of the island house
 a mark of pleasant contrast, especially when, as in the narrow-front
 house, the *προστώον* is open and has an arch, instead of columns, for
 supporting the roof (Plate VIIa 5). Apart from this, the regular division
 of the interior, the order and regularity noted in the arrangement
 of household furniture and utensils and the passionate love of the
 islanders for decoration, so that all parts of the house are fully adorned,
 constitute marked facts of the Greek island house.

From this summary review it is clearly seen that Greece, situated
 on the SE end of the European Continent and by its Islands, a
 neighbour of the districts of SW Asia and NE Africa, presents both
 the basic types of housing architecture and a variety of building
 forms, the proof of a long and important evolution, according to the
 geographical position, the nature of the ground and the long history
 of its civilization.

- * 342 Greek architecture, which has its origin in the prehistoric Greek
 174 and in general the North European house, namely the megaron⁽¹⁾,
 341 makes its appearance in neolithic and Mycenaean times, and
 survives to this day in some regions with a surprisingly undimin-
 ished energy. This architecture has gradually perfected its ways
 and means of construction and improved the form of the dwelling.
 And first, it often deviated from the narrow to the wide-front
 types⁽²⁾, probably for the advantages presented by a long front side,

1) F. Behn in Eberts Reallex. d. Vorgeschichte, 5 (1926) 186 foll. 193
 Gerda Boëtius, Studier i. Den Nordiska Timmerbyggnadskonsten. Stockholm
 1927, pp. 25 and foll. Eldhuset eller Megarontypen.

2) This tendency for a wide front is shown by the neolithic houses
 (D. Robinson in RE Suppl. VII p. 226) According to Fr. Oelmann, Gnomon
 1927, p. 173, on those countries neighbouring the area of flat-roof houses, and
 under their influence, the eagle-type house disappeared and became wide-fronted.

which can easily have a wider *προστώον* by a simple extension of the roof. In the beginning, it succeeded in forming the outline of a farm house, consisting of one or two rooms, with an open *προστώον* at the front, adapted to the natural elements (soil, climate, building materials) and to the occupation of the inhabitants, and gradually formed various types of agricultural houses.

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This effect was possible, as it has been proved, because the *προστώον* is an element capable of undergoing change⁽¹⁾, sometimes remaining open, and sometimes being totally or partially closed and incorporated to the main body of the house. By a continuous but organic evolution, those composite types of the modern Greek house were also formed, where the individual spaces are developed as if round the central yard, which is surrounded by a peristyle, with exactly the same method as it may be seen in the byzantine and post-byzantine monasteries and in the remains of the excavations at Olynthos, Delos and Priene.

Thus, the close relation and connection of the modern Greek house to the ancient one becomes obvious and, since the formation of the housing architecture is mainly related to the nature of the land, the study of the modern Greek houses is very profitable for the understanding of the equivalent architectural forms of ancient Greece; because, as it was very rightly stated by Franz Oelmann (Gnomon, 1927, p. 174) «the complete understanding of ancient Greek building forms, as that of any other country, is not possible without the exact knowledge of the modern popular architecture».

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Although in order to clarify the relation of the modern Greek house to the ancient one, I think it advisable to state in as brief a form, as possible, a summary of ancient house building, giving at the same time general evolutionary diagrams of the main types of building, as they are revealed by recent excavations which have contributed so admirably to our knowledge⁽²⁾.

1) The *προστώον* is very often seen in the houses of the Arian and Indo-European races, with many variations, and constitutes a basic element of the houses of this group of races (see H. Behn, in Eberts Reallex. d. Vorgeschichte, 14 (1929) pp. 216 and foll.

2) See the article of David Robinson in Pauly-Krolls RE Suppl. VII 1940, 226-276. G. Karo in Eberts Reallex. d. Vorgesch. 5, 202 foll. Cf. B. Rider, The Greek House, Cambridge 1916. Chr. Tsountas, 'Ιστορία 'Αρχ. 'Ελληνικῆς Τέχνης, Athens 1928. D. S. Robertson, A Handbook of Greek and Roman